



**For Release: Thursday, September 12, 2019**

**19-1615-KAN**

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## **Consumer Price Index, St. Louis area – August 2019**

**Area prices inched down 0.1 percent over the past two months, up 1.1 percent from a year ago**

Prices in the St. Louis area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), inched down 0.1 percent for the two months ending in August 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that the decrease was influenced by lower prices for food (-2.4 percent) and energy (-0.4 percent). The index for all items less food and energy rose 0.4 percent over the period. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U for the St. Louis area increased 1.1 percent. The index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.8 percent over the year. Food prices were unchanged. Energy prices decreased 3.2 percent, largely the result of lower prices for gasoline. (See [table 1.](#))

### **Food**

Food prices decreased 2.4 percent for the two months ending in August. (See table 1.) Prices for food at home were virtually unchanged (-0.1 percent) and prices for food away from home decreased 4.9 percent for the period.

Over the year, food prices were unchanged. Prices for food at home decreased 2.2 percent from August 2018 to August 2019, but prices for food away from home advanced 2.6 percent.

### **Energy**

The energy index decreased 0.4 percent for the two months ending in August, with all three major components of the index contributing to the decline. Prices for gasoline were down 0.4 percent. Costs for electricity and utility (piped) gas service declined 0.4 and 0.3 percent, respectively.

Energy prices decreased 3.2 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-5.8 percent). Prices paid for electricity advanced 0.6 percent, while prices for utility (piped) gas service decreased 1.8 percent over the 12-month period.

### **All items less food and energy**

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 0.4 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for household furnishings and operations (2.9 percent) had the largest upward impact on the index. The index for other goods and services (-1.1 percent) was among those that registered lower prices.

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 1.8 percent. Higher prices for shelter (2.8 percent) and medical care (3.2 percent) led the increase. Partly offsetting the increases were price declines in categories such as apparel (-8.7 percent) and household furnishings and operations (-1.0 percent).

The St. Louis metropolitan area Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) stood at 232.882 in August 2019. A typical market basket of goods and services that cost \$100.00 in the 1982-84 base period cost \$232.88 in August 2019.

### **CPI-W**

The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the St. Louis metropolitan area for August 2019 was 230.932. The CPI-W was unchanged over the two months and rose 0.7 percent over the year.

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**The October 2019 Consumer Price Index for the St. Louis area is scheduled to be released on November 13, 2019.**

### **Technical Note**

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers approximately 29 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at [www.bls.gov/cpi](http://www.bls.gov/cpi) and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at [www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf).

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater

volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The St. Louis, MO-IL, area covered in this release includes Bond, Calhoun, Clinton, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties in Illinois; and Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, St. Charles, St. Louis, and Warren counties and St. Louis City in Missouri.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

**Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, St. Louis, MO-IL (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)**

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from -		
	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019	Aug. 2018	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019
All items .....	233.063	-	232.882	1.1	-0.1	-
All items (1967 = 100) .....	692.235	-	691.699			
Food and beverages .....	262.655	-	256.207	-0.2	-2.5	-
Food .....	262.791	-	256.511	0.0	-2.4	-
Food at home .....	231.560	231.444	231.316	-2.2	-0.1	-0.1
Cereals and bakery products .....	215.623	-	211.448	-7.1	-1.9	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs .....	246.375	-	238.699	-6.4	-3.1	-
Dairy and related products .....	157.827	-	162.552	-8.8	3.0	-
Fruits and vegetables .....	358.273	-	354.619	3.0	-1.0	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1) .....	170.544	-	173.640	-1.7	1.8	-
Other food at home .....	225.475	-	229.626	1.6	1.8	-
Food away from home .....	313.503	-	298.128	2.6	-4.9	-
Alcoholic beverages .....	232.359	-	224.785	-2.6	-3.3	-
Housing .....	228.267	-	229.429	2.1	0.5	-
Shelter .....	267.227	266.950	267.877	2.8	0.2	0.3
Rent of primary residence .....	243.251	244.092	243.739	2.0	0.2	-0.1
Owners' equivalent rent of residences(2) .....	277.847	277.815	278.406	2.4	0.2	0.2
Owners' equivalent rent of primary residence(2) .....	277.847	277.815	278.406	2.4	0.2	0.2
Fuels and utilities .....	239.377	-	238.679	1.6	-0.3	-
Household energy .....	216.598	215.697	215.752	-0.1	-0.4	0.0
Energy services .....	219.519	218.581	218.661	-0.1	-0.4	0.0
Electricity .....	236.756	235.833	235.749	0.6	-0.4	0.0
Utility (piped) gas service .....	151.610	150.817	151.155	-1.8	-0.3	0.2
Household furnishings and operations .....	117.734	-	121.105	-1.0	2.9	-
Apparel .....	136.795	-	138.721	-8.7	1.4	-
Transportation .....	194.162	-	193.756	-0.9	-0.2	-
Private transportation .....	195.268	-	195.369	-0.9	0.1	-
New and used motor vehicles(3) .....	93.604	-	93.513	0.4	-0.1	-
New vehicles(1) .....	207.071	-	206.160	0.6	-0.4	-
Used cars and trucks(1) .....	304.310	-	310.871	2.7	2.2	-
Motor fuel .....	243.400	254.960	242.297	-5.9	-0.5	-5.0
Gasoline (all types) .....	239.465	251.082	238.498	-5.8	-0.4	-5.0
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4) .....	230.029	241.374	228.988	-6.0	-0.5	-5.1
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5) .....	285.922	302.956	286.742	-4.6	0.3	-5.4
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4) .....	250.983	258.355	250.201	-4.1	-0.3	-3.2
Motor vehicle insurance(1) .....	578.479	-	578.479	0.5	0.0	-
Medical care .....	464.477	-	466.802	3.2	0.5	-
Recreation(3) .....	114.326	-	115.229	1.9	0.8	-
Education and communication(3) .....	136.291	-	137.599	1.8	1.0	-
Tuition, other school fees, and childcare(1) .....	1,220.553	-	1,234.297	-	1.1	-
Other goods and services .....	336.512	-	332.687	3.8	-1.1	-
<b>Commodity and service group</b>						
Commodities .....	188.543	-	188.664	-0.9	0.1	-
Commodities less food and beverages .....	152.190	-	154.745	-1.4	1.7	-
Nondurables less food and beverages .....	210.771	-	212.727	-2.7	0.9	-
Durables .....	100.054	-	102.744	0.4	2.7	-
Services .....	278.910	-	278.435	2.5	-0.2	-
<b>Special aggregate indexes</b>						
All items less shelter .....	223.126	-	222.670	0.4	-0.2	-
All items less medical care .....	221.493	-	221.171	0.8	-0.1	-
Commodities less food .....	155.707	-	157.969	-1.4	1.5	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods, St. Louis, MO-IL (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued**

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from -		
	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019	Aug. 2019	Aug. 2018	Jun. 2019	Jul. 2019
Nondurables .....	237.188	-	235.155	-1.4	-0.9	-
Nondurables less food.....	213.453	-	214.744	-2.7	0.6	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	298.401	-	296.826	2.2	-0.5	-
Services less medical care services.....	262.030	-	261.323	2.3	-0.3	-
Energy .....	228.909	234.165	227.940	-3.2	-0.4	-2.7
All items less energy .....	236.458	-	236.354	1.5	0.0	-
All items less food and energy .....	232.141	-	233.052	1.8	0.4	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on an March 1978=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a November 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Index on a December 1993=100.

- Data not available.